

Health Advisory:

European-wide Alert About Rabies in France

September 9, 2004

This document will be updated as new information becomes available. The current version can always be viewed at <http://www.dhss.state.mo.us/>.

The Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS) is now using 4 types of documents to provide important information to medical and public health professionals, and to other interested persons:

Health Alerts convey information of the highest level of importance which warrants immediate action or attention from Missouri health providers, emergency responders, public health agencies, and/or the public.

Health Advisories provide important information for a specific incident or situation, including that impacting neighboring states; may not require immediate action.

Health Guidances contain comprehensive information pertaining to a particular disease or condition, and include recommendations, guidelines, etc. endorsed by DHSS.

Health Updates provide new or updated information on an incident or situation; can also provide information to update a previously sent Health Alert, Health Advisory, or Health Guidance; unlikely to require immediate action.

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FROM: RICHARD C. DUNN
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SUBJECT: European-wide Alert About Rabies in France

The European Commission last week issued an urgent notice regarding a European-wide search for people who may have had recent contact with a rabid dog in southwestern France. CDC is providing information about this situation in the event that state and local health departments receive inquiries from persons who may have traveled recently in Europe.

On August 26, laboratory testing at the Pasteur Institute in Paris confirmed that the dog was rabid. The infected dog, a 4-month-old female pup that had been illegally imported into France in July, died on August 21. The rabid animal is thought to have had multiple opportunities to transmit the disease to humans and other animals in southwestern France between August 2 and August 21, according to the European Commission's notice. As of August 31, approximately 300 people (all French) had contacted health authorities about having had possible contact with the rabid dog, and 47 of these persons had been referred for rabies postexposure prophylaxis.

U.S. residents who visited southwestern France (refer to the Eurosurveillance Weekly article below for map) and believe they may have had contact with the infected dog should contact their state or local health department. (The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services can be reached at 1-800-392-0272.)

Additional information about the situation in Europe is available at the following websites:

- A September 6 press release from the European Commission describing the alert:
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/1068&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- A September 2 description of the case in Eurosurveillance Weekly:
<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ew/2004/040902.asp#1>
- A September 1 notice on the website of the World Health Organization: http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_09_01a/en/
- A French government notice (in French) with photos of the rabid dog: http://www.agriculture.gouv.fr/spip/actualites_a3739.html.

For additional information about rabies, please visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies/>

If you have further questions, please contact 573-751-6404.